

## Message Text

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DRAFTED BY: NEA:ESWALKER

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TO AMEMBASSY MUSCAT IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 015705

FOL REPEAT OF STATE 015705 TO AMMAN BEIRUT CAIRO DAMASCUS  
GENEVA JIDDA KUWAIT KHAHRAN JERUSALEM KHARTOUM MANAMA TEHRAN  
TEL AVIV TUNIS TRIPOLI RABAT LONDON PARIS MOSCOW ROME USUN  
NATO SANAA BAHGDAD DOHA ABU DHABI ALGIERS CINCEUR JAN 23

QTE:

UNCLAS STATE 015705

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS  
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING JANUARY 22, 1975:

Q. WHAT IS THE LATEST ON THE SECRETARY'S TRAVEL PLANS? I  
GATHER THERE ARE REPORTS FROM THE MIDEAST THAT HE'S COMING.

A. WELL I HAVE SEEN THE SAME REPORTS. I CAN'T GIVE YOU  
ANYTHING YET. THE DATES FOR A POSSIBLE VISIT TO THE MIDDLE  
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EAST HAVE NOT BEEN SET YET -- BUT AS ALWAYS, AS SOON AS THEY  
ARE, YOU WILL GET THEM IMMEDIATELY.

Q. HAS THE APPROXIMATE TIME BEEN SET?

A. NO. WELL I MEAN, THERE HAVE BEEN -- AS I LOOK OVER THE PRESS REPORTS I'M SORT OF WONDERING ABOUT IT, FOR MYSELF TOO, I FIND THAT I COULD BE IN THE MIDDLE EAST ANY TIME FROM ABOUT FEBRUARY 3 THROUGH FEBRUARY 20 -- AS I GET VARIOUS REPORTS IN THE PRESS.

SO I THINK THAT THE BEST THING TO DO IS, LET'S JUST WAIT UNTIL IT'S SET -- AND THEN WE'LL HAVE IT. ACCURATE.

Q. YOU SAY YOU ARE UNABLE TO TELL US WHEN THE SECRETARY IS GOING TO THE MIDDLE EAST. DOES THIS MEAN YOU HAVEN'T GOT THE AUTHORITY TO TELL US OR THE PLANS HAVEN'T BEEN MADE YET, OR EXACTLY WHAT?

A. THE DATES HAVE NOT BEEN SET FOR THE SECRETARY'S TRIP TO THE MIDDLE EAST.

Q. WOULD YOU ENDEAVOR TO FIND OUT FOR US IN A GENERAL WAY, YOU KNOW, WITHIN TERMS OF THREE OR FOUR DAYS EVEN ON EITHER SIDE, WHEN THE SECRETARY IS LIKELY TO BE GOING TO THE MIDDLE EAST, AND WHAT COUNTRIES HE IS LIKELY TO VISIT, AND HOW LONG THE TRIP IS LIKELY TO TAKE. THIS IS WITHOUT HAVING AN ETA FIXED.

A. I KNOW.

Q. AND ON THAT QUESTION, ALSO, IF THE DATES ARE NOT SET-- I MEAN, MAYBE IT IS NOT SET THAT WE ARE GOING TO EGYPT ON FEBRUARY 9TH, BUT ARE WE GOING THAT WEEK TO EGYPT, ISRAEL, ETC.?

A. I WILL GO BACK TO THE SECRETARY AGAIN. I DISCUSS THIS SUBJECT WITH HIM, I CAN ASSURE YOU, EVERY DAY.

Q. HE SAID YESTERDAY HE IS GOING IN THE NEXT WEEKS.  
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A. HE SAID HE WOULD BE GOING IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS. THAT IS WHAT HE SAID YESTERDAY. NOW, IN LIGHT OF -- AND HE SAID THIS ON THE RECORD, I BELIEVE, AFTER HIS APPEARANCE ON THE HILL -- SO I DID NOT RAISE, IN LIGHT OF THAT COMMENT YESTERDAY NOON, OR WHENEVER IT WAS, I DID NOT RAISE WITH HIM AGAIN THIS MORNING IF HE HAD A SPECIFIC DATE OR ANYTHING. BUT I KNOW THAT AS OF NOW, HE HASN'T GOT THE SPECIFIC DATE.

Q. I AM MORE INTERESTED NOT SO MUCH IN THE EXACT DATES BUT THE MOTIVATION FOR THE TRIP.

NOW, YOU HAVE SAID AT THIS PODIUM AND HE HAS SAID THAT HE

DIDN'T WANT TO GO TO THE MIDDLE EAST AGAIN UNLESS THE GAP HAD BEEN NARROWED BETWEEN THE TWO POSITIONS.

HAS THE GAP BEEN NARROWED BETWEEN THE EGYPTIAN AND ISRAELI POSITIONS, OR HAS HE CHANGED HIS POSITION, AND IS HE GOING TO THE MIDDLE EAST IN AN EFFORT TO NARROW THE GAP.

A. I CANNOT ANSWER THE FIRST QUESTION. THE SECOND QUESTION, HE WILL GO TO THE MIDDLE EAST WHEN HE BELIEVES THE TIME IS RIGHT FOR HIM TO MOVE FORWARD THE NEGOTIATIONS.

Q. WELL, THAT IS NOT WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN SAYING FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS HERE. I AM TRYING TO ASCERTAIN IF THERE HAS BEEN A CHANGE. THE ISRAELIS HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THEY THOUGHT NOTHING COULD BE GAINED IN THE MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATIONS UNLESS THE SECRETARY WENT PERSONALLY TO SPEAK TO PRESIDENT SADAT OF EGYPT. AS OF ABOUT TEN DAYS AGO, YOU WERE SAYING THAT THAT WAS NOT -- THE SECRETARY BELIEVED THE GAP HAD TO BE NARROWED MORE. NOW I LEAVE THAT QUESTION WITH YOU. OBVIOUSLY, SINCE YOU CAN'T ANSWER THE FIRST PART OF IT, I WISH YOU WOULD PUT IT TO HIM.

Q. WHEN MR. ALLON WAS HERE, DID THE UNITED STATES RAISE WITH ISRAEL THE POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING AN AMERICAN BASE IN ISRAEL -- MILITARY BASE?

A. TO MY KNOWLEDGE, THIS SUBJECT NEVER CAME UP.  
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Q. CAN WE CHANGE THE SUBJECT BECAUSE WE HAVE A LOT OF QUESTIONS HERE. ONE IS ABOUT THE SADAT INTERVIEW IN LE MONDE IN WHICH HE SAID -- AND I QUOTE -- "I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT WASHINGTON WILL SOON RECOGNIZE THE REPRESENTATIVENESS -- I CAN'T QUITE MAKE IT OUT -- OF THE PLO."

Q. WELL, THERE MIGHT BE A GARBLE HERE. "RECOGNIZE THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PLO. IT WOULD THEN BE UP TO THE UNITED STATES AND THE USSR, AS GUARANTORS OF THE CEASE-FIRE IN THE NEAR EAST, TO INVITE THE PLO TO SIT DOWN AT THE GENEVA NEGOTIATING TABLE."

DO YOU HAVE A COMMENT ON THAT?

A. NO.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT ON ANY PART OF THE SADAT SPEECH, IN WHICH HE MENTIONED "SECRETARY KISSINGER WILL NOT DISAPPOINT US" AND THINGS LIKE THAT?

A. WELL, WE HAVE SEEN SOME OF THE REPORTS OF THE INTERVIEW IN LE MONDE, AND WE OBVIOUSLY ARE PLEASED BY WHAT THE PRESIDENT REPORTEDLY SAID IN THE INTERVIEW ABOUT HIS RE-

AFFIRMATION OF THE DESIRE TO CONTINUE A STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH IN THE NEGOTIATIONS.

Q. WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER PART ABOUT THE PLO?

A. I HAVE NO COMMENT ON THAT.

Q. THERE HAVE BEEN REPORTS IN THE ISRAELI PRESS, APPARENTLY BASED ON ISRAELI INTELLIGENCE, THAT THERE HAS BEEN A RESUMPTION OF MASSIVE SOVIET ARMS SUPPLY TO EGYPT. CAN YOU CONFIRM WHETHER THIS IS TRUE AND ALSO COMMENT ON THE ACTUAL RESUMPTION?

A. NO. I'VE SEEN THE REPORTS. I CAN'T CONFIRM IT. I DON'T HAVE ANY COMMENT.

Q. I HAVE A FOLLOW-UP. THERE HAS BEEN A REPORT ALSO THAT UNCLASSIFIED

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SAUDI ARABIA HAS REQUESTED UNITED STATES F-15 FIGHTER PLANES. IS THAT TRUE?

A. I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER IT IS TRUE OR NOT.

Q. DID THE ADMINISTRATION EVER CONSIDER THE IDEA OF ESTABLISHING AMERICAN BASES IN ISRAEL, WITHOUT ANY RELATION TO THE VISIT OF MR. ALLON HERE?

A. TO MY KNOWLEDGE, THIS HAS NEVER BEEN CONSIDERED, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AMERICAN BASE IN ISRAEL.

Q. THE SECRETARY WILL GO TO ISRAEL AT THE INVITATION OF OF THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT. DID HE ACCEPT SIMILAR INVITATIONS FROM EITHER SYRIA OR EGYPT TO MAKE AN OFFICIAL VISIT IN THESE TWO COUNTRIES?

A. I CANNOT GIVE YOU ANYTHING DEFINITE ON THAT. BUT LET ME JUST SAY THIS: ON PAST TRIPS WHEN THE SECRETARY HAS VISITED VARIOUS ARAB CAPITALS HE HAS GONE AT THE INVITATION OF THE LEADERS THAT HE HAS MET. SO WHEN HE GOES ON HIS NEXT TRIP I THINK IT IS FAIR TO ASSUME THAT HE WILL BE GOING AT THE INVITATION OF THE LEADERS THAT HE WILL BE MEETING. BUT I CANNOT ANSWER YOUR QUESTION SPECIFICALLY.

Q. ON A PREVIOUS TRIP I WAS TOLD BY VERY GOOD SOURCES IN JORDAN THAT THE SECRETARY ANNOUNCED HE WAS COMING BEFORE HE WAS INVITED AND THERE NEVER HAD BEEN AN INVITATION. IS THIS TECHNICALLY TRUE?

A. I'M UNAWARE OF THAT STORY. I FRNAKLY WOULD BE VERY SURPRISED IF THAT WERE TRUE.

Q. CAN YOU EXPLAIN THE MOTIVATION FOR THE REPORTED U.S. REQUEST FOR OCCASIONAL LANDING RIGHTS AT THE BRITISH BASE ON MASIRA OFF OMAN?

A. THE MOTIVATION OF OUR REQUEST?

Q. WHAT THE BASE WOULD BE USED FOR. WHAT KIND OF PLANES WOULD LAND THERE.

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A. I CAN'T GIVE YOU ANYTHING ABOUT THE TYPE OF PLANES. I BELIEVE THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT ADDRESSED THIS SUBJECT. BUT LET ME MAKE ONE OR TWO COMMENTS FOR YOU HERE -- THAT WE HAVE MORE SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT VISITING THE INDIAN OCEAN IN LINE WITH OUR STATED POLICY OF ESTABLISHING A MORE REGULAR U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE AREA. IN LINE WITH OUR STATED POLICY -- AND THIS WAS STATED, I THINK, A YEAR AGO BY SECRETARY SCHLESING -- OF ESTABLISHING A MORE REGULAR U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE AREA -- I.E., IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA -- AND BECAUSE OF THIS WE HAVE RAISED WITH OMANI GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS OUR INTEREST IN HAVING PERMISSION FOR U.S. MILITARY AIRCRAFT TO USE BRITISH LANDING FACILITIES ON MASIRA OCCASIONALLY OR FOR AIRCRAFT EMERGENCIES. THIS IS THE EXTENT OF OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH OMAN AND WITH THE UNITED KINGDOM ON THIS ISSUE. AND THIS REMAINS UNDER DISCUSSION WITH BOTH GOVERNMENTS, AND COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS ARE BEING INFORMED.

AND THE ONLY ADDED THING I COULD SAY, WHICH, FRANKLY, GOES WITHOUT SAYING REALLY, IS THAT WE DON'T ENVISAGE ANY PERMANENT PRESENCE, BUT RATHER AN OCCASIONAL PRESENCE FOR EMERGENCY AIRCRAFT USE ONLY.

Q. IS IT NECESSARY TO NEGOTIATE PERMISSION TO MAKE AN EMERGENCY LANDING? IT SEEMS TO ME A PLANE IN DISTRESS IS ALLOWED TO LAND ANY PLACE.

A. I DON'T WANT TO INTERPRET OR EXPAND ON WHAT I'VE SAID HERE. IT'S FOR OCCASIONAL USE AND FOR EMERGENCY AIRCRAFT.

Q. WILL THIS INCLUDE COMBAT AIRCRAFT?

A. I DON'T KNOW.

Q. WHY HAS THE UNITED STATES DEVELOPED A POLICY OF ESTABLISHING A MORE REGULAR U.S. PRESENCE IN THE AREA? YOU SAY COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS ARE BEING INFORMED. WERE THEY CONSULTED WHILE THAT POLICY WAS BEING FORMED?

A. I WOULD ASSUME THAT THEY WERE CONSULTED WHILE THAT  
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POLICY WAS BEING FORMED. I DON'T WANT TO GET INTO THE POLICY OF ESTABLISHING A MORE REGULAR U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THAT AREA. THIS IS SOMETHING THAT WAS ESTABLISHED A YEAR OR A YEAR AND A HALF AGO.

Q. DOES THIS MEAN THAT YOU GAVE UP THE IDEA OF HAVING DIEGO GARCIA?

A. I DON'T THINK THERE IS ANY DIRECT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO, AS FAR AS I KNOW. BUT YOU MIGHT WANT TO, IN ANSWER TO YOUR SPECIFIC QUESTION, YOU MIGHT WANT TO CHECK DEFENSE.

Q. YOU WERE UNABLE TO ANSWER LARS' QUESTION ABOUT COMBAT AIRCRAFT, AND YET YOU USED THE TERM "U.S. MILITARY AIRCRAFT," WHICH PRESUMABLY WOULD INCLUDE COMBAT AIRCRAFT. RIGHT?

A. IT MAY.

Q. IT COULD, YES.

A. IT COULD, YES.

Q. AND THE OTHER THING IS ON THE DEFINITION OF EMERGENCY, IS THE DEFINITION THAT LARS PUT ON IT THE ONE THAT YOU INTENDED, OR COULD AN EMERGENCY BE WAR? WAR COULD BE AN EMERGENCY, COULDN'T IT?

A. WELL, ON THE QUESTION OF WAR AND THE U.S. INTERVENTION, I DON'T THINK I NEED TO GO INTO THAT SUBJECT ANY MORE.

Q. NO. I'M JUST TRYING TO FIND OUT WHETHER THE DEFINITION THAT LARS WAS PLACING ON THE WORD "EMERGENCY" WAS, IN FACT, AN AIRCRAFT IN TROUBLE OR AN EMERGENCY IN THE MORE GENERAL SENSE OF THE WORD.

A. I WOULD TAKE IT THE FORMER. THAT'S MY OWN INTERPRETATION.

Q. WHEN YOU WERE SPEAKING OF COUNTRIES THAT ARE INVOLVED UNCLASSIFIED

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IN DISCUSSIONS REGARDING THE BASE, WAS SAUDI ARABI INVOLVED AS A PRINCIPAL PARTY TO THESE DISCUSSIONS OR NEGOTIATIONS OR WHATEVER?

A. FOR THE SUBJECT THAT WE WERE JUST TALKING ABOUT?

Q. YES.

A. TO MY KNOWLEDGE, NO.

Q. LARS, I THINK QUITE RIGHTLY, POINTED OUT THAT IF A PLANE IS NEEDING TO MAKE AN EMERGENCY LANDING IT WOULD PROBABLY BE UNTHINKABLE FOR A BRITISH BASE TO REFUSE AN AMERICAN PLANE THE RIGHT TO LAND. THEREFORE, I WOULD LIKE TO PURSUE TED'S QUESTION OF WHAT IS MEANT BY EMERGENCY.

A. WELL, I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN GET FOR YOU. BUT I THINK YOU MIGHT WANT TO PURSUE THIS TYPE OF QUESTION ALSO OVER AT DEFENSE BECAUSE THAT GETS INTO OPERATIONAL QUESTIONS.

Q. WELL, I THINK IF IT WERE A QUESTION OF A PLANE IN TROUBLE THAT MIGHT BE OPERATIONAL, BUT I THINK THE BROADER MEANING OF EMERGENCY MIGHT BE PURSUED HERE AS WELL.

A. LET ME SEE WHAT I CAN DO.

Q. THE SECRETARY WAS THE ONE WHO RAISED THIS QUESTION WITH SULTAN QABOOS, RATHER THAN THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT, I UNDERSTAND, SO I DON'T SEE WHY WE SHOULD BE REFERRED OVER TO THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT.

A. WELL, IT WAS DISCUSSED, I BELIEVE, HERE AND OVER IN THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT. AND THE SULTAN, I BELIEVE, MET WITH DEFENSE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS ALSO.

Q. BECAUSE THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT IS REFERRING US BACK TO YOU.

A. WELL, AND I HAVE GIVEN YOU ALL I CAN AT THIS TIME. END QUOTE. KISSINGER UNQTE INGERSOLL  
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